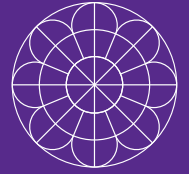


Important Things to Know About the FAFSA Simplification Act



The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a crucial form for students seeking financial assistance for college. It determines eligibility for federal grants, loans, and work-study programs. In an effort to simplify the process and increase accessibility, the Department of Education is preparing to release a new, streamlined FAFSA.

The FAFSA Simplification Act, passed by Congress in 2020, aims to reduce the number of questions on the application and make federal aid more readily available, particularly Pell Grants. Here are six important things to know about the changes to the FAFSA.

1. FAFSA will open in December

Traditionally, the FAFSA has been available from October 1 each year. However, with the introduction of the new FAFSA, the opening date will shift to December. Students and their families should be prepared to submit their applications starting from the end of December, allowing ample time to complete the form.

2. FSA ID is more important than ever

To start the FAFSA, a Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID is required. Students and parents must have an FSA ID to fill out the form, including parents without a social security number. More information about this process is expected this fall.

3. Shorter and more user-friendly application

Gone are the days of wading through a lengthy questionnaire with more than 100 questions. The new FAFSA is expected to be much shorter and more user-friendly, with approximately a dozen questions. This streamlined format will simplify the application process and make it less daunting for students and their families.

4. Change from Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to Student Aid Index (SAI)

A notable terminology update within the new FAFSA is the replacement of the term Expected Family Contribution (EFC) with the Student Aid Index (SAI). The EFC, or now the SAI, is an index number used by colleges to assess a family's financial need compared to other applicants. It is important to note that the SAI is not the amount families should or must pay, but rather a measure used to determine their eligibility for financial aid.

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5. Removal of the multiple children discount

Under the current FAFSA guidelines, families with multiple children simultaneously enrolled in college have enjoyed increased financial aid eligibility. This has been especially beneficial for parents with twins or closely aged children. However, the new FAFSA will no longer offer this discount. Families should be aware that their financial aid calculations will no longer be impacted by having multiple children in college at the same time.



6. Change in the parent responsible for submitting the FAFSA in cases of divorce or separation

For divorced or separated parents, the responsibility of submitting the FAFSA will change under the new legislation. Starting from the 2024-25 academic year, the parent who provided the most support in 2022 will be required to complete the FAFSA. This is typically, but not always, the parent who claims the student on their tax return. It's important for families in these situations to plan accordingly and ensure the appropriate parent is responsible for filing the FAFSA.

7. Don't pay anyone to do your FAFSA

The key to the FAFSA is the first word – FREE. Please do not pay anyone to complete your FAFSA. Our dedicated staff will be happy to assist you and your family and answer all of your questions. Please remember – no third-party can guarantee you financial aid just because you pay them to do your FAFSA!

The Office of Student Financial Services is here to help!

Navigating the changes to the FAFSA can be challenging, but help is available. The Student Financial Aid Office is dedicated to assisting families with the new FAFSA. They can provide guidance, answer questions, and ensure a smooth application process. Please reach out to our knowledgeable staff at financialaid@converse.edu to schedule an appointment or call 864-596-9019 to speak with a staff member.

As the Department of Education prepares to release a new, streamlined FAFSA, it is important for students and their families to stay informed about the upcoming changes. The revised FAFSA aims to simplify the application process and increase accessibility to federal financial aid. By being aware of the key points above, students can be better prepared to navigate the new FAFSA and maximize their opportunities for funding their college education.

[Link: Student Financial Services](#)